

MINUTES

Bar Harbor Cruise Ship Task Force

Thursday May 22, 2008

8:30 AM

Council Chambers

Municipal Building

93 Cottage Street

I. Call to Order

Members present: Chairman Paul Paradis; Vice-Chair Chris Fogg; Secretary Anne Krieg; Nathan Young, Police Chief; Harbormaster Charlie Phippen; Councilor Greg Veilleux; Amy Powers; Greg Gordon; Mary Opdyke, Bob Bahr

II. Excused Absences

George Seavey was excused by a motion from Phippen and seconded by Gordon.

III. Minutes were tabled to the next meeting by the Chair at the request of the Secretary.

IV. Adoption of agenda passed on a motion by Veilleux and seconded by Phippen.

V. Staff Reports

The Harbormaster reviewed with the group a meeting he had with the Coast Guard on a plan for a secured facility at the Pier

VI. Regular Business

A. Continue discussion with Ocean Properties on future plans for West Street and service to Cruise Ship tenders and passengers.

No one from Ocean Properties was present at the meeting.

Amy Powers informed the group that her communications with US Customs and Border Protections has indicated they have no knowledge of a secure facility planned for Harborside. They have given the manual to Ocean Properties but no other communication has occurred. There appears to be no set plan filed with this agency. Krieg reviewed previous Planning Board reviews. Opdyke expressed concern about on site maneuverability for buses and conflicts with pedestrians and vehicles accessing the hotel.

B. Cruise Ship Fees

i. Report from Cruise Fee sub-committee

The group met and is making progress on establishing a fee structure. There will be a convention in June with industry leaders to review some ideas and concepts. Paradis met with staff and it was noted that staff's goals are directed by the Town Council's goals.

C. Walking Map

i. Discussion and possible action on how to move forward with development and implementation.

Bahr indicated the Economic Development Task Force (EDTF) is also working on mapping and visitor information noting it was important that one needs to coordinate with the other. Krieg reviewed the work done thus far as her position also serves the needs of the EDTF.

Paradis noted that this group had commenced the project and that the purpose of the map was specifically for visitors from cruise ships. Fogg reviewed the funding from fees. Other possible sources of funding were discussed.

The group also discussed the 18 month rule on fee setting; that is, that any fees would not take effect for 18 months in order to give adequate time for the industry to plan accordingly.

It was noted that this particular map project is a short term solution to an existing problem and then coordinate with EDTF later.

Fogg moved, with a second from Young to create a sub-committee to investigate the production of a cruise ship walking map.

In discussion the work of the committee would be to investigate costs, types of production and funding sources. The committee would be made up of Bob Bahr, Mary Opdyke, Greg Veilleux and Anne Krieg.

All were in favor of the motion.

D. Drop-off point

i. Further discussion and possible action on testing a downtown drop-off on cruise ship days during the spring and/or fall season.

Opdyke questioned if a second stop could be planned for only September and October to coordinate with existing peak vehicular traffic.

Young reminded the group that a response from Island Explorer remains necessary before we can move to accommodating downtown passengers on tour buses.

There was extensive discussion on the drop-off options focusing on:

- Adding time to route as a concern
- Incontinent route for visitors
- Lengthy walk to return to ship
- Many passengers do come up to the Village Green now
- Length of buses with the number of parking spaces necessary to displace to allow buses to drop off passengers
- Need for police monitoring

Gordon moved Veilleux seconded: recommend a test to be conducted on June 22nd, 2008 of using exiting legal parking spaces from the Sea of Cotton to the Parkside for the purpose of a drop-off area of tour buses. Such test will be coordinated by the Police Department. Greg Gordon and Nate Young will report back to the Task Force their observations of the test.

There was public comment from the manager of Sea of Cotton supporting a second stop.

Krieg and Young noted that it will be necessary to have police monitoring these spaces all day to ensure no one parks there and that this test is important to determine if the area can physically accommodate bus drop-off. It was also noted that if one bus stops, all will stop.

All were in favor of the motion.

Phippen moved Cook seconded: to recommend the Police Department and the tour Companies coordinate the date of a second test date based upon any findings from the first date, and report back to the Task Force.

All were in favor of the motion.

Disseminating the information of these events was discussed but no action was taken. Obtaining feedback after these events was noted as crucial and the task force members noted that they should seek responses.

VII. Public Comment

The manager for the Sea of Cotton requested that if it rains, the trial would be re-scheduled. She also agreed to the importance of providing a map for cruise ship visitors. She noted the value in providing information on how long it takes to attend certain events (as in the Abbe Museum and the Shore Path).

VIII. Items for next agenda

The group will hear updates from the fees' group and the walking map.

IX. Set next meeting time, date and place

A. 8:30am, June 12, 2008, Council chambers.

X. Adjournment at 10:20 AM